

Message Text

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DEPT PASS CU/AF KENNETH CHARD

FROM AMBASSADOR SPIRO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CM
SUBJECT: VICE CHANCELLOR VICTOR NGU, UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE,
CAMEROON

1. PLEASE TRANSMIT FOLLOWING LETTER TO ADDRESSEE SOONEST.

MR DEREK BOK, PRESIDENT
HARVARD UNIVERSITY
MASSACHUSETTS HALL
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

DEAR PRESIDENT BOK:

DR VICTOR NGU, VICE CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE,
WILL BE IN BOSTON FOR THE FOURTH TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS, FROM
NOVEMBER 10TH TO 13TH. I HAVE SUGGESTED TO HIM THAT HE CALL ON
YOU, AND I WANT TO ASK YOU TO RECEIVE HIM - AS A FAVOR TO ME,
AS A MEMBER OF THE CLASS OF 1950, AND AS A POSSIBLE FAVOR TO
HARVARD BECAUSE DR NGU IS A REMARKABLE SCHOLAR-ADMINISTRATOR,
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE AN INTERESTING INSTITUTION WITH
CONSIDERABLE POTENTIAL.

DR NGU WON A LASKER PRIZE FOR CANCER RESEARCH IN
1972 AND I HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT HE STANDS SOME CHANCE OF BECOMING
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THE FIRST AFRICAN TO RECEIVE A NOBEL PRIZE IN MEDICINE. THIS,

HOWEVER, IS NOT THE REASON FOR HIS CURRENT TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES. LIKE SOME OTHER SCHOLARS I KNOW, HE RELUCTANTLY TOOK ON THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER OF HIS UNIVERSITY, WHICH INCIDENTALLY HAS HAD A TEAM OF INSTRUCTORS FROM THE HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS WITH VERY GOOD RESULTS.

THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE IS CURRENTLY PLANNING TO ADD DOCTORAL PROGRAMS AND TO ESTABLISH A UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. DR NGU IS CAUTIOUS AND MODEST ABOUT THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMS, AND WAS RELUCTANT TO APPROACH HARVARD. HOWEVER, I TOLD HIM THAT HE MIGHT AT LEAST EXCHANGE VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES WITH APPROPRIATE MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND, CONCEIVABLY, SOME SORT OF RELATIONSHIP MIGHT DEVELOP. THE UNIVERSITY OF YAOUNDE GREW UP UNDER HEAVILY FRENCH TUTELAGE. HOWEVER, LIKE THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON, IT IS OFFICIALLY BILINGUAL AND HAS BEEN DELIBERATELY DIVERSIFYING ITS EXTERNAL RELATIONS.

I AM WRITING JEROME WIESNER AT M.I.T. ABOUT DR NGU'S TECHNOLOGICAL INTERESTS, AND SHALL ALSO INTRODUCE HIM TO CAL PLIMPTON, JOHN KNOWLES, AND MARTIN MEYERSON. I DO VERY MUCH HOPE THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO GIVE HIM A GOOD (AND DIVERSIFIED) RECEPTION AT HARVARD. (HE WILL BE STAYING AT THE STATLER-HILTON.)

SINCERELY YOURS,

H.J. SPIRO
AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED REPUBLIC
OF CAMEROON (YAOUNDE)
SPIRO

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